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THE BLESSING OF GIVING

by **ROLLIE DIMOS (/EN/ARTICLE-REPOSITORY/AUTHORS/ROLLIE-DIMOS)** on January 10, 2020

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In case you haven't noticed, the Bible has a lot to say about money. There are 2,350 verses related to money, and Jesus spoke on the topic often, incorporating this subject in half of the 32 parables.

The topic of money in Scripture is important because how we view money is an indicator of what we value or treasure in our lives. Our view of money demonstrates where we ultimately put our trust: in God, or in ourselves.

How do you view your relationship between money and God? Is it with an open hand, or a closed fist? If you view it as a closed fist, then it is probably hard for you to be generous in giving to others, to the Church, and to God. If you find it hard to be generous with tithes and offerings, we can bring clarity to the topic by looking at what Scripture says about giving through three lenses: our relationship, our obedience, and our promised blessing.

OUR MONEY RELATIONSHIP

Many have a hard time with the topic of giving because our financial life is filled with anxiety. How will we make ends meet if we regularly give a portion of our income away? This worry comes from a misunderstanding of our relationship to money. We may be thinking, *Is it God's money or my money?* Another way of asking the question is, "How much is God's and how much is mine?"

In reality, we have to come to the conclusion that we aren't the owner, but God is. As the apostle Peter admonishes, our job is to be faithful stewards of what the Master has entrusted to us.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10).

God is the giver of our gifts and resources; we are merely His managers.

In Matthew 6:26, Jesus says: "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"

Jesus is reminding us to place our trust in God for our daily needs. When we do, we can cast aside worry and fear because God our Provider has a heavenly storehouse to meet our every need.

OBEDIENCE IN GIVING

Scripture is clear that Christians should tithe on their income as an act of obedience and a recognition that all of our resources are given to us by God.

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it" (Malachi 3:10.)

While a tithe is understood as 10 percent, I see this as a minimum amount. In fact, trying to nail down a percentage doesn't recognize that 100 percent of all that we make and own belongs to God.

After we are obedient in giving tithes, we must continue to steward the remaining 90 percent. It is important to budget and manage the rest of your resources that God has entrusted to you. And when God directs you to give more and be generous with your remaining resources, trust Him! He is your Heavenly Father who owns the cattle on a thousand hills (Psalm 50:10). He will take care of you!

BLESSING THROUGH GIVING

Being generous is a common theme woven throughout Scripture. You cannot read very long without seeing God's generosity to the world and Christ's generous gift of salvation to humanity. Clearly, Christ's followers

are to respond in generosity toward others.

Proverbs 3:9-10 admonishes us to be generous with our finances, and in return, God promises to bless us.

"Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine."

Galatians 6:7 is a well-known passage known as the Law of the Harvest. One of the principles is that you reap what you sow. If you sow corn, you will reap corn. If you sow kindness, you will reap kindness. And when you are generous with your money and sow into God's kingdom, you can expect to reap financial blessings from God so that you can continue to sow generosity. This may not mean you will receive unexpected money in the mail, but it does mean that God will continue to bless your generosity and take care of your needs. "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

As we are generous with the resources God has entrusted to us, we can trust Him to return His blessing to us "a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over" (Luke 6:38).

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